HE2 (meaning a triglyceride of 1 saturated fatty acid of 16 or more carbon atoms and 2 trans-unsaturated fatty acids), and so on for other 3 letter codes.
Fat compositions can thus be characterised in containing certain weight percentages (based on the total amount of triglycerides) of triglycerides of the above codes.

Although it is mentioned for E and U that they may have any length, it is to be understood that this relates to fatty acids of approx. 8-24 carbon atoms, and more usually 16-20 carbon atoms.

EP 1038444 discloses hard butter compositions for use in chocolate, wherein said hard butter component comprises 50-80% SUS triglycerides (S being C16 and C18 saturated fatty acids, U being C16 and C18 unsaturated acids) and is free from trans acids and lauric acids.

US 5,858,427 discloses compositions for use as coatings on ice creams, said compositions comprising 20-60% sugar, 20-70% fat, 0-30% protein. The fat is preferably low in trans unsaturated fatty acids and contains 25-80% SUS (S being saturated fatty acids of 16-24 carbon atoms, U being unsaturated acids of 18 or more carbon atoms), and the fat has a specified melting behaviour (N_0 of 40-80, N_{20} of 15-60, N_{25} of 2-20). The compositions can be made by mixing all ingredients.

EP 545463 discloses a fat blend for confectionary (chocolate) not needing tempering, which fat blend is low in trans fatty acids, and which blend comprises more than 50% SUS (S being saturated fatty acids of 16-24 carbon atoms, U being C18:1 and C18:2) and less than 30% S'OS' (S' being saturated fatty acids of 16-18 carbon atoms, O being C18:1).

US 5,939,114 discloses ice cream coating compositions with reduced waxiness and a low content of trans unsaturated fatty acids, wherein the fat composition contains less than 10% SSS, 25-80% SUS, 2-20% SSU, 8-60% SUU and USU, less than 10% UUU (S being saturated fatty acids of 16-24 carbon atoms, U being unsaturated acids of 18 or more carbon atoms). The coating composition may contain (next to 20-70% of said fat) the usual ingredients for such compositions: 25-60% sugar, and 0-30% cocoa powder, milk proteins, flavours and emulsifiers. The compositions can be made by mixing all ingredients.

Summary of the invention

It has now been found that the objectives as given above may be met (at least in part) by

The manufacturing process of the particulates according to the invention suitably involves preparing an emulsion or dispersion of the fat and the matrix material (preferably followed by a homogenising step) followed by drying said emulsion or dispersion. Said drying is preferably done by spray-drying but other drying processes such as for example heat drying (including vacuum freeze drying), air drying etc can also be employed. The emulsion or dispersion of the fat and matrix material in an aqueous liquid can be prepared by means as known in the art, e.g. high shear mixing (optionally followed by homogenising), membrane emulsification techniques, or other means.

The invention further relates to the use of the particulates according to the invention as creamer and/or thickener and/or whitener and/or non-dairy cream alternative. Such creamer and/or thickener and/or non-dairy cream alternative can be in the form of a cube, pellet or tablet.

The invention also relates to (savoury) food compositions comprising the particulates according to the invention. Hence, the invention further relates to a composition comprising 2-50% wt salt, 0-30% wt MSG, 0-20% wt herbs and/or spices, 0-30% wt vegetable particulates, 0-30% wt starch-based thickener and further comprising 0.1-65% wt (preferably 2-50% wt) of the particulates according to the invention. Such (savoury) compositions can be in the form of flakes, granules, powder or agglomerated or pressed to a cube, pellet, or tablet, and can be intended e.g. as a soup- or sauce concentrate.

The (dry) particulates according to the invention can also be applied in liquid or pasty products (e.g. savoury products) in which a creaming effect is desired. Such liquid or pasty products usually contain some water, and when the particulates according to the invention are incorporated in such liquid or pasty products the dry particulates will generally melt and/or dissolve, and no longer be visible as such. Examples of such liquid or pasty products are wet soups and sauces, which are often pasteurised, aseptically packaged, or sterilised products (as replacer for e.g. liquid cream). Hence, the present invention further relates to a process for preparing a liquid or pasty sauce, soup or concentrate of such a sauce or soup or concentrate, which process includes the step of including 0.1-65% wt (preferably 2-50% wt) of the particulates according to the invention as set out herein in such liquid or pasty sauce, soup or concentrate of such a sauce or soup or concentrate.

Detailed description of the invention

further comprising 0.1-65% wt (preferably 2-50% wt) of the particulates according to claim 1-19.

21. Composition according to claim 20 in the form of flakes, granules, powder or agglomerated or pressed to a cube, pellet, or tablet.

22. Composition according to claim 20-21, which is a soup- or sauce concentrate.

23. Process for manufacturing the particulates according to claim 1-19, comprising the steps of:
- preparing an emulsion or dispersion of the fat and matrix material in an aqueous liquid
- drying said emulsion or dispersion.

24. Process according to claim 23, further comprising a homogenising step prior to the drying of the emulsion or dispersion.

25. Process according to claim 23-24, wherein the drying is carried out by spray-drying.

26. Process for preparing a liquid or pasty sauce, soup or concentrate of such a sauce or soup, which process includes the step of including 0.1-65% wt (preferably 2-50% wt) of the particulates according to claim 1-19 in such liquid or pasty sauce, soup or concentrate of such a sauce or soup.